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| **Date:** | 27 February 2012 |
| **Subject:** | Beef industry has a steak in e-learning |

Beef producers in Queensland are trialling an e-learning training initiative that will deliver online programs in environmental, land and stock management to their doorsteps...or paddocks.

With around 17,000 beef producers in Queensland alone, the traditional mode of face-to-face workshops delivered by several accredited trainers requires participants to travel significant distances. This can be inconvenient and costly, particularly given the vastness of outback Queensland. Some producers also have to wait many months for a workshop to be run in their area.

“The Stocktake Reef e-learning package will provide beef producers from reef catchment areas in North and Central Queensland with access to broadband-based training programs,” says project leader Jane Hamilton, of Queensland’s Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI).

“The e-learning package delivered on the National Broadband Network (NBN) will bring training to them that will help them understand their land condition, develop stocktake pasture monitoring skills and use software tools to assist management decisions around grazing lands.”

“The NBN will deliver rich media training typically only distributed in the past via CDRom. Using the high speed capacity and stability of the NBN, DEEDI trainers will deliver online workshops for up to 10 beef producers concurrently, where the trainer will be able to see and communicate with each producer in a virtual classroom set-up,” says Kathy Barakis from GVMedia, DEEDI’s technology partner for this program.

‘Participants will even learn the quality of their own pasture in real time by sharing visuals, with the clarity and speed that only the NBN can deliver.’

DEEDI’s FutureBeef program helps commercial beef businesses to become more productive and sustainable through the on-farm adoption of best management practices and technologies. The FutureBeef team uses a range of engagement modes including research projects, facilitated producer groups, field days, producer demonstration sites and training workshops. This exciting expansion into e-learning complements its face-to-face delivery and improves accessibility to information and flexibility of training options for producers.

This project has been made possible through funding from the National VET E-learning Strategy, whose NBN E-learning Programs provide opportunitiesto create innovative approaches to demonstrate the power of broadband to enhance outcomes for learners, and promote growth in broadband-based training as the NBN rollout proceeds.

The National VET E-learning Strategy is the responsibility of the Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG), a key policy advisory group on national directions and priorities for information and communication technologies in the VET sector.

“Used strategically, this new technological environment is providing unprecedented access to more accessible training and learning opportunities,” says FLAG Chair Raymond Garrand, Chief Executive of the South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

**Core statements for editorial use**

* The National VET E-learning Strategy 2012-2015 (‘the Strategy’) is aimed at strengthening the Australian training sector’s use of new learning technologies, stimulating innovative approaches to increasing participation in training and employment, and improving the skill levels of the Australian workforce
* Investment in the Strategy will stimulate innovative approaches to increasing participation in training and improve the skill levels of the Australian workforce
* To enable the three-year program of action, government funding has been approved to:
* capitalise on the rollout of the National Broadband Network by demonstrating the benefits of the national investment in broadband
* support large-scale workforce development in industry through partnerships and comprehensive e-learning advice
* expand participation and access for individuals through e-learning programs delivering foundation skills and e-literacy
* The Strategy is managed by the Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG), a key policy advisory group on national directions and priorities for information and communication technologies in the VET sector
* The chair of FLAG is Mr Raymond Garrand, Chief Executive of the South Australian Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

**About GVMedia**

GVMedia is an eLearning and Communications technology company with substantial experience delivering award-winning educational, promotional and corporate communications solutions. We partner with subject matter experts (including private and public TAFEs and RTOs) to produce innovative and measurably effective eLearning programs and deploy LMS and integrated online platforms rich in their use of collaboration and 2-way communication tools.

GVMedia delivers to high standards, against PRINCE2 methodology and we are a preferred supplier to federal and state government eLearning panels. GVMedia is currently deploying two NBN trials and is one of the first IT companies to establish a presence on the NBN.

We advocate for innovation, continuous improvement and industry collaboration.

**Contact**

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